National Priority 2: Enhanced Regional Collaboration

The program managers for this section are:

Ted Costin
Virginia Dept. of Emergency Management
Ted.costin@vdem.virginia.gov

Hampton Hart
Virginia Dept. of Emergency Management
Hampton.hart@vdem.virginia.gov

Gordon Barwell
Virginia Dept. of Emergency Management
Gordon.barwell@vdem.virginia.gov

For questions on this section please contact Ted, Hampton or Gordon.

To provide input on any part of this section please direct your comments to:
Susan Mongold
Office of Commonwealth Preparedness
804-692-2598
Susan.mongold@governor.virginia.gov

This section is intended to address issues such as:

Associated Factor: Inter-State Regional Collaboration
o   Describe inter-state regional collaboration, including formalized inter-state mutual aid agreements.

Associated Factor: Intra-State Regional Collaboration
Describe intra-state regional collaboration, including governance structures, committees, and partnerships; regional coordination of expenditures; formalized mutual aid agreements; and exercises testing mutual aid agreements.

National Priority 2: Enhanced Regional Collaboration

A. Accomplishments

Intra-State Collaboration Accomplishments

The Council of Governments (COG) within the National Capitol Region (NCR) fosters intra-state collaboration. In 2007, Virginia accomplished the following goals with respect to collaboration with States outside of the Commonwealth:

- Significant progress is being made in the NCR and Northern Virginia on developing regional plans that identify critical infrastructure, critical facilities, resources, evacuation and sheltering. Regional planning efforts are on-going statewide, and three regional planners have been hired by VDEM to assist localities/regions with planning.
- Statewide Mutual Aid (SMA) forms have been redesigned and standardized for intrastate use.
- The Attorney General's office has made provisions for future deployments to be conducted under SMA when a locality is deployed under EMAC.
- The Commonwealth trained 163 individuals in EMAC and SMA Advance Team procedures and duties (which is the largest group from any State in the country).
- District Planning Commissions are in place throughout the Commonwealth that cross into other states (MD, WVA, NC, DC).
- The Fairfax Chief Administrative Officer recently agreed to fund a project for Prince George County, Maryland.

Inter-State Collaboration Accomplishments:

Virginia has an extensive program of both inter- and intra-state collaboration and cooperation. The following accomplishments have been made with respect to inter-state collaboration:

- Each of VDEM's seven homeland security regions has a full-time Regional Coordinator, and all agency business is conducted through the regionalization program.
- All of the 139 eligible Virginia localities have adopted the Statewide Mutual Aid for Emergency Management, agreeing to provide assistance when requested, subject to availability of resources, and setting out general requirements and procedures.
- District Planning Commissions are in place throughout the Commonwealth that cross jurisdiction boundaries.
- Region Policy and Action Committees (RPACs), an OCP initiative, work within each region to improve collaboration on State programs and initiatives. The OCP, VDEM, and VSP all focus on RPAC regions for planning and exercises.
- In late 2006 Virginia established the Virginia Higher Education Preparedness Consortium to bring together Virginia Colleges with each other and with state agencies. Virginia has also begun critical infrastructure resiliency studies in partnership with Virginia's research colleges.

- In 1997, the Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN) Division was established by legislative mandate to foster the creative utilization of geographic information and oversee the development of a catalogue of GIS data available throughout the Commonwealth. The VGIN Division is located in the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, under the Secretary of Technology. After Hurricane Isabel in 2003, VDEM added a GIS position. The Virginia Readiness, Response, and Recovery Geographic Information System (VR3) was developed as a proof of concept to create a common operational picture. At roughly the same time, WebEOC was selected to serve as an incident management system. Because the information is Web-based, real-time incident viewing and tracking is available to authorized users anywhere in the world. VR3 was not designed to directly integrate with WebEOC, so for this phase of the project, Towson University's Emergency Management Mapping Application (EMMA) has been selected to serve as the GIS Interface to WebEOC. EMMA will provide the common operational picture, while being able to directly integrate with WebEOC.
- As an example of accomplishments on a regional level, Region V has robust regional collaboration between the 16 members of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) and across the state's borders into NC to the south and into MD on the eastern shore. The region also participates with Federal and military partners in the DOD Regional Threat Working Group.

B. Current Capabilities

Inter-State Regional Collaboration:
<Narrative Current Capabilities, including responses to appropriate Appendix E prompts>
Need info here

Intra-State Regional Collaboration:
<Narrative Current Capabilities, including responses to appropriate Appendix E prompts>
Need info here

C. Three-Year Targets

Inter-State Regional Collaboration:

Target Description	Projected Completion Year	Status
Provide more emergency management planning support to local jurisdictions. Enhance the regional structure and planning districts w/ full time planning positions.	2010	Open
Develop regional disaster plans to support preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts across multiple jurisdictions within Virginia and across State lines	2010	Open
Continue to improve inter- and intra-state collaboration (communication and cooperation) at the State level and to	2010	Open

Target Description	Projected Completion Year	Status
encourage the same for the jurisdictions.		
Expand the Fusion Center concept into a regional intelligence and analysis center which incorporates Fire, EMS, Public Health, Emergency Management and Transportation into the intelligence and law enforcement information sharing networks. **NO INTIAITVE???**	2010	Open
Enhance the Fire Service CAD – Computer Aided Dispatch – There is a delay in coordinating responses that cross boundaries. There is a need to be able to view neighboring jurisdictions dispatches and status. **NO INTIAITVE???**	2010	Open
Create a GIS template – There needs to be a Commonwealth model for critical technologies. The GIS System, in particular, needs standards for entering data. There needs to be a platform common to the entire Commonwealth.	2010	Open

Intra-State Regional Collaboration:

Target Description	Projected Completion Year	Status
The Commonwealth will have regional disaster plans to support preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts across multiple jurisdictions within Virginia and across state lines.	2010	Open
Continue to improve inter- and intra-state collaboration (communication and cooperation) at the state level and to encourage the same for the jurisdictions.	2010	Open
Develop a method for reunification of family members (across state lines) following a disaster	2010	Open

D. Initiatives

Regional planning staff augmentation will be provided to assist regional and local planning efforts including plan development, governance structure management, capability assessment, gap analysis and resource allocation. (Inter-State Targets 1, 2, 3 and Intra-State Targets 1, 2)

Description
This investment will implement two related planning activities. For first activity is the placement of an EM regional planner in 6 of the 7 regions within Virginia. These planners will be hired through a local fiscal agent in each region and work across all regional jurisdiction on issues including Mutual Aid Agreements, Continuity of Operations Planning, Evacuation and Sheltering Plans, and serve as the planner to assist with regional issues including the

management of the regional governance structure. The second activity is to provide staff augmentation for all seven regions the regional planners and EM in completing jurisdictional capabilities assessment. The data collected through this process will be entered into the National Preparedness System providing a planning tool for each jurisdiction, region and the Commonwealth of Virginia. During the three years of grant performance a total of 24 of the capabilities critical to Virginia will be assessed and documented.

Virginia has 7 homeland security regions encompassing 139 jurisdictions. Only 1 of the 7 has regional planners hired to focus on the planning needs of the localities. While state agencies have regional planners focused on planning needs of the state agencies, the localities rely on their EMs for all assessment, coordination, and planning functions. In some localities EMs may be part-time positions or have this function as one of many duties. The locality EMs may provide state metrics rather than focusing on implementing After Action findings and measuring local preparedness. A regional planner will be able to assist the localities by applying a systemic approach to identifying and implementing regional solutions and with deeper assessment and planning.

However the scope and depth of information captured by the new National Planning System requires more time than the UASI planner and local EMs have available. Focused support through contractor support to implement the NPS. This investment will provide all localities the opportunity complete detailed capabilities assessment and document the output in FEMA's National Preparedness System. The NPS provides gap analysis and capabilities reports at the local/UASI levels to greatly improve the UASI/State's decisions on resources and priorities.

Prior to receipt of funding, each regional will ID a fiscal agent that will manage the funds for both the hiring and management of a regional planner as well as the support for capabilities assessment. The state and regions will agree upon the order of the 37 target capabilities to assess with priority given to the TCs identified in the 2008 State Preparedness Report, the UASI and the Virginia Homeland Security Strategies. The SAA will complete a procurement process providing a variety of support options for localities. This will provide contractual options without each region being required to conduct separate procurement processes. No HSGP funds will be used to complete these upfront activities.

This investment will addresses a planning gap in Virginia capabilities. This gap/solution was identified as part of the SPR stakeholder input sessions. Measurements will be used to set priorities for resources and provide a solid baseline for ongoing self assessment.

Geographic Scope:
This initiative impacts six of the seven regions. A total of eight regional planners will be brought on board across six regions to assist with planning and governance management. All seven regions will also have staff augmentation to assist with the assessment and documentation of target capabilities.

Program Management:
The Virginia Department of Emergency Management is the State Administrative Agency. The FY08 grant funds will be awarded to the SAA and the sub-awarded to seven jurisdictions. Each

jurisdiction will have been selected by the region to serve as the fiscal agent and project manager for this investment. The SAA will also serve initially as the contract manager completing the statewide contract for vendor conducted capability assessments.

SAA procurement – The SAA has a full time procurement office managed by the Director of Purchasing. He has completed the Virginia Contracting Officer program and works closely with both the localities as well as the state's procurement governing body.

Locality project and contract management – Each region will select a fiscal and project agent to manage this investment. Criteria for selection include ample staff resources and qualifications, a record of appropriate fund usage and timely reporting, as well as positive audit reviews. The locality public safety entity selected to hire and supervisor both the regional planner as well as NPS contractor will have a Memorandum of Understanding with all regional jurisdictions outlining responsibilities and timelines. This entity will be required to be an active member of the regional governance structure (see below) and have a proven record of serving as the hub for regional preparedness needs.

Governance Structure – The SAA and Office of Commonwealth Preparedness have in place a Regional Preparedness Advisory Committee structure. This governance structure will be used to monitor the progress and effectiveness of this solution for the identified gap. The RPAC meets quarterly, involves multi-disciplinary representation from all public safety entities, NGO and business/industry within the region. This governance structure is well into its second year of operation and, while each region is at a different level of maturity, the regions are being to understand how to maintain the communication and coordination between meetings. These seven groups are staffed by the SAA and OCP.

Enhance Regional Collaboration and Statewide Planning (Inter-State Targets 1, 2, 3, 6)

Description:
This initiative will promote regional collaboration through a variety of actions including the development of volunteer databases, enhancement of WebEOC capacity, and the creation of a committee focusing on this subject.

- Each of the regional workshops made evident that localities know their partners in preparedness. While some jurisdictions have recommended that State agencies change boundaries to create a single definition of regions, the more common recommendations for actions as part of this initiative were as follows:
  - Provide a mechanism by which localities can tell OCP/VDEM which jurisdictions are already working together.
  - Use this information to better locate the regional meetings, identifying if any localities are excluded, and create partnerships to encourage collaboration, planning, and sharing.
  - Continue to hold meetings in six or seven locations using the regional format established by the VSP or VDEM while at the same time encouraging localities to cross jurisdictional lines and attend the meeting that works best with their natural partners.

- Place more "central office" staff into regional offices to help regional groups identify common needs and solutions, complete surveys, and develop regional working group governance (examples include the VDEM regional coordinators, VITA PSAP regional coordinators, VDH regional planners).
- A high-level committee, designed to institutionalize NIMS and NRP implementation, will:
  o Provide recommendations for implementation guidance
  o Identify opportunities for regional collaboration in planning, training, exercises, and emergency operations
  o Collect and publish best implementation practices, serve as a regional information-sharing instrument
  o Provide compliance assessments to senior leaders.
- The State and local governments will conduct regional exercises annually that include coordination with Federal agencies, regional groups, local government and private industry, volunteer organizations and Border States (as appropriate).
- The Commonwealth will convene an annual statewide "All-Hazards" conference for first responders, emergency management personnel, local government officials and other stakeholders to provide a vehicle for information sharing and networking.
- The Commonwealth will procure and provide WebEOC capacity in all localities, public utilities, appropriate private organizations (Red Cross, VOAD) to allow for regional collaboration and to provide a consistent platform among all users. Through VDEM's regional coordinators, the state will develop a regional disaster coordination plan that "dovetails" with local EOPS and the State EOP.
- The State will develop and maintain a database of private and nonprofit sector volunteers with technical skills and abilities to support response and recovery operations.
- The Commonwealth will contract with a private organization that can develop regional capacity to coordinate, broker and design training opportunities for private nonprofit and faith-based groups that respond to disasters and assist citizens and communities in recovery efforts.
- As an example of activities on the regional level, Region III will focus on the following actions:
  o Emphasize regional preparedness as a priority with a focus on "staff, not stuff."
  o Increase staffing levels for planners to improve planning at region, district, and local levels.
  o Engage leadership and citizens in localities in preparedness programs and increase education, training, and planning activities.
  Region V identified the following actions as part of this initiative:
  o Begin to act, work, and think like a region and get the regional leadership to conduct the planning groups' business in a more professional manner.
  o Follow established procedures, implement discipline and accountability, set priorities, publish decisions, and provide procedural training for new members.
  o Enhance WebEOC operations within the region – "we have the money to do this, but we need time and more personnel assigned to the project." The REMTAC should make this a priority project.
  o The HRPDC needs to enhance the collaborative process by getting organized – define stakeholders, develop overarching goals and objectives, refine the region's strategy,

define roles and functions, and provide coordination for the many groups conducting the region's business.

o   Conduct more regional exercises to test first responders and examine evacuation, mitigation and recovery issues. Exercises should be based on terrorism scenarios as well as natural disasters (such as hurricanes).

o   Review and update all MOAs/MOUs region wide.

Geographic Scope:
This initiative will have a statewide influence, encompassing each of the 134 municipalities, all urban areas, each of the seven homeland security regions, several dozen state agencies, key private sector partners, and volunteer groups.

Program Management:
Key stakeholders representing the emergency services disciplines, local governments, and State agencies will play a pivotal role in implementing this initiative. In particular, the proposed committee, in consonance with the Governor's Executive Order Number 102 (and working closely with the State Administrative Agency, the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group, the Secure Commonwealth Panel, and the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness) will provide oversight for these regional collaboration activities

The Quad-State Interoperability Initiative (QSII) (Intra-State Targets 1, 2, 3)

Description:
This initiative addresses the need for a continuous flow of critical information among jurisdictions, emergency responders, command posts, agencies, and government officials for the quad-state region of West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Due to its proximity to the nation's capital it is likely an incident will occur in the quad state region. Likewise, if something occurred in the nation's capital, the ripple effect will highly affect the quad states. These states are leading the nation in interstate collaboration, and this initiative is intended to serve as a national model. The collaboration and the associated "seed money" from the Homeland Security Grant Program will help establish the business model for demonstrating bordering state collaboration—it will also lay the larger integration groundwork for future collaboration and the funding that will support it.

This multi-state and multi-jurisdiction initiative will support the development of new and improvement of existing continuity of operations plans for public safety communications, its critical components, networks, support systems, personnel, and an appropriate level of redundant communications systems on an interstate regional basis. Through this initiative the states will:
- Establish procedures and protocols to improve interconnectivity
- Formalize standards and agreements through officially establishing and staffing a governance structure
- Further develop relationships to create interoperability policies between states
- Enhance the ability to manage critical resources thus enhancing Command and Control
- Connect Virginia's statewide microwave backbone to the West Virginia backbone allowing state agencies from both states to communicate via the existing communication systems

In addition to the above actions that must be taken at the State level, the following actions must be taken at a broader level to achieve this initiative:

- The current process for governance will need to be leveraged and expanded to create an official Quad State Interoperability governance structure to include an Executive Steering Committee and Initiative Advisory Committee (IAC) with membership from each State. This Committee will need to be attained/staffed by subject matter experts from each states interoperability program;
- Individual State plans will need to be reviewed for points of intersection and leveraged to create a regional compatibility plan. The task should be contracted and managed by the committees to expedite its completion;
- A baseline survey must be conducted to determine regional gaps in resources processes and tools. The task should also be contracted and managed by the committees in order to expedite its completion;

At this point, each State has:

- Developed and are maturing statewide radio architectures;
- Established or is establishing intra-state governance structures (i.e. the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinators' Office, Maryland's Interoperability Governance Working Group and Statewide Interoperability Executive Steering Committee);
- Been granted membership on the board of directors and partake in the Mid-Atlantic All Hazards Consortium.

Geographic Scope:
The geographical context of this initiative includes the states of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania with a specific focus on adjoining borders that frequently work together for emergencies, law enforcement investigations, evacuations, or mutual aid. These states also make up a large part of FEMA Region III.

Program Management:
Through this initiative the intricacies of multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary interoperability will be addressed through regional collaboration. By sharing lessons learned, leveraging developments in architectures, critical components, networks, and support systems, and creating a true regional interoperability capability the state's overall homeland security program is strengthened. This initiative realizes the true nature of expanding regional collaboration and once established can be replicable for other capabilities and for other regions.

This initiative has the beginnings of a governance process which will need to be expanded and formalized. The concept for this includes, but is not limited to, an Executive Steering Committee which will consist of state policy makers and an Initiative Advisory Committee (IAC) consisting of technical experts from each state. The governance structure will serve as a coordinating body with ownership of the initiative belonging to the individual states.

Expand Family Assistance and Reunification Center Model (Intra-State Targets 1, 2, 3)

Description:
Using UASI grant funds given to Arlington County, this initiative focuses on developing a plan to establish a Family Assistance Center following disasters. Although Arlington County is the UASI grant manager, the developed plan (deliverable in May 2006) applies to Virginia and Maryland counties and cities, as well as the District of Columbia. The Family Assistance Center will serve the following functions:
   • Relatives of missing victims of a terrorist act or large-scale natural disaster can register and provide information to the medical examiner's office about missing relatives.
   • Relatives can receive official notification that their missing family member(s) have been positively identified and are deceased, that the missing have been found alive, or that a case remains open.
   • Disaster victims and relatives of the missing can register for Federal, State, or local disaster assistance, including crisis or mental health counseling.
   • Registered applicants can receive status updates on the progress of their applications for various forms of disaster assistance.

Once regional jurisdictions receive the initial training in the Family Assistance and Reunification Model, the operational use of the model will be incorporated within local, regional, and statewide plans. After the plans have been revised, the establishment of a Family Assistance and Reunification Center will be exercised. Starting in late 2008, establishment a Family Assistance Center will be included in all exercises involving terrorist events and large-scale natural disasters.

Geographic Scope:
Any region within the Commonwealth must have the capacity to stand-up a Family Assistance Center. It is essential that a facility for providing services to disaster victims and their families be as near as possible to the actual site of the disaster.

Program Management:
The regional alignment of resources, the identification and authority to command, and the expeditious delivery of services and information can best be provided only when staff and volunteers are well trained in the design, operation and execution of a Family Assistance Center and Reunification Model. The Virginia Department of Social Services, the Office of the Medical Examiner, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management have unique experience with the Family Assistance Center model given their work with the military's implementation of a Family Assistance Center following the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. Furthermore, these offices have experience working in similar facilities — Disaster Recovery Centers — that are established by FEMA following federal disaster declarations for natural disasters within the Commonwealth.

A partnership with elected officials and local government staff in the regional jurisdictions will be established. All State, local, federal, and non-profit agencies (social services, health, mental health, law enforcement, Red Cross, Salvation Army, FEMA, IRS, etc.) having a role in a Family Assistance Center must integrate effectively for the program to work successfully.

E. Resources

Resources Expended in FY 2007

Interoperability Capability Assessment Baseline: This multi-state effort will identify opportunities for partnering among the Mid-Atlantic States, with the overall goal of avoiding duplicative costs, creating cooperative operations and improving interoperability across the region during disasters.
$250,000

Multi-state Mass Care and Evacuation Planning: Virginia will join with Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia and the District of Columbia to establish a coordinated catastrophic disaster plan. The plan will build upon existing state and National Capital Region plans to develop a regional approach to evacuation and mass care.
$84,500

Outreach – Ready Virginia – The Ready Virginia campaign will unite local, state and national preparedness efforts. Ready Virginia will use a combination of free and paid advertising, public relations, Internet and grassroots efforts to reach a diverse audience.
$276,299

Statewide Shelter Implementation (Local Mega Shelter Enhancements) – This investment supports state and local shelter enhancement projects. It will enhance shelter use and maintenance during an evacuation and make state shelters more accessible to a wide range of potential evacuation populations.
$2,400,000

Future Resources Required

Need info here